

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8694

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC, EIND, IV

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT - SAN PEDRO PAPER PULP MILL

REF: (A) ABIDJAN 2878, (B) ABIDJAN 12084

1. SAN PEDRO PAPER PULP MILL PLANS CONTINUE PRETTY MUCH ON SCHEDULE.

A MINISTRY OF PLAN OFFICIAL REPORTS THAT TWO TECHNICAL

CONSULTANTS HAVE BEEN NAMED:

GUY MONARCH, OF SANDWELL, MONTREAL AND MR. ALONEN, OF
JAAKO POYRY, A FINISH FIRM. THE GENERAL CONTRACTOR IS
EXPECTED TO BE NAMED IN JUNE AND THE TWO SWEDISH AND
ONE CANADIAN FIRM (REF B) ARE STILL THE MAJOR CONTENDERS.
ALONG WITH THE GENERAL CONTRACT WILL GO RESPONSIBILITY
FOR OVERALL CONSTRUCTION, A FIVE YEAR MANAGEMENT CONTRACT,
AND A TEN YEAR MARKETING CONTRACT.

2. MOST RECENT PREDICTIONS ARE THAT THE MILL SHOULD
BE IN PRODUCTION BY 1983 AND THAT, WHEN WORKING AT FULL
CAPACITY, WILL PRODUCE 300,000 M.T. OF KRAFT PAPER PER
YEAR. AT THE OUTSET, TROPICAL HARDWOOD WILL BE THE BASIC
RAW MATERIAL, BUT PLANS CALL FOR EVENTUAL REFORESTATION
OF THE AREA IN FAST MATURING SOFTWOOD (PROBABLY
EUCALYPTUS) AND A SWITCH TO THAT AS THE PRIMARY INPUT.

3. THE GOIC HAS STATED THAT IT WILL PUT UP THE "RISK
CAPITAL" (EQUITY ?) ITSELF AND WILL LOOK FOR OTHER
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COMMERCIAL FINANCING ABROAD (SUPPLIES' CREDITS, BANK
AND EUROCURRENCY LOANS). TOTAL COST IS STILL ESTIMATED
AT ABOUT \$750 MILLION WITH \$400 MILLION BEING THE
COMPONENT FOR THE MILL ITSELF.

4. DESPITE RESERVATIONS OF MANY WHO HAVE LOOKED AT
THE PROJECT, INCLUDING THE WORLD BANK, GOIC CONTINUES

TO BELIEVE THE PROJECT IS A GOOD ONE. AS STATED,
THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL REQUIRING THE PROSPECTIVE GENERAL
CONTRACTORS TO ACCEPT A LONG TERM RESPONSIBILITY FOR
THE PLANT'S OUTPUT BY INCLUDING A TEN YEAR MARKETING
CONTRACT AS PART OF THE TENDER PACKAGE. THIS, IT IS
HOPED, WILL FACILITATE ADDITIONAL COMMERCIAL BOWWOWING
NECESSARY TO FINANCE THE PROJECT. EMBASSY WILL REPORT
FURTHER ON PROJECT AS ADDITIONAL DETAILS BECOME
AVAILABLE.
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